

**HAMPTON BOARD OF SELECTMEN
SELECTMEN'S MEETING ROOM
JANUARY 8, 2007 – 7:00 PM**

PRESENT: Virginia Russell-Russell, Chairman
Ben Moore, Vice-Chairman
Rick Griffin
James Workman
Bill Lally
Mark Gearreald, Interim Town Manager
Maureen Duffy, Administrative Assistant

REGRETS:

Salute to the Flag

A moment of silence was held for Bill Elliot who recently passed away at 101 years of age. He was best known locally as The Singing Cop.

Chairman Virginia Bridle-Russell called the meeting to order at 7:00PM and introduced all those in attendance.

I. ANNOUNCEMENTS AND COMMUNITY CALENDAR

None

II. APPOINTMENTS

1. MARY LOUISE WOOLSEY – 2007 BUDGET

Chairman of the Budget Committee Mary-Louise Woolsey commented on the cooperation that she and the Committee members have been receiving from staff at the Town Hall. She noted what a marvelous resource the new Finance Director Mike Schwotzer is to the Town of Hampton and thanked him for a job well done.

Mrs. Woolsey talked about the wide range of expertise and experience that each member brings to the Budget Committee. She noted that the Committee should not be seen as an enemy to the Selectmen but a group that acts as a check and balance system in observance of the Town's financial management. She also noted that the Budget Committee is dedicated to advocate on behalf of taxpayers and is an advisory body that does not set policy.

Mrs. Woolsey mentioned that recommendations to the Selectmen as requested accompanied the Committee's budget figure.

The Chairman of the Budget Committee said that she would like to have two copies of the full accounting of the two bonds that have been assigned to the Kings Highway and Beach Infrastructure project.

Mrs. Woolsey noted that we have the ability to evaluate the spending in the three taxing districts that enables us to gain a better understanding of the tax burden on the community as well as the community's ability to assume debt. Mrs. Woolsey said that the proposed operating budget, plus bonds, plus special money articles, minus anticipated revenue is a complete picture of the Town's financial position. The factors that the Committee considered this year include the following:

- a. Town Debt Service – The Town has a debt of \$38.3 million allocated to 2025.
- b. School District Debt Service – The School system has a debt of \$9.6 million
- c. Debt Service for Winnacunnet Cooperative School District – revenues estimated at \$709,197 and their debt payment is \$199,671 (approximately \$9 million in debt). Unfunded federal mandate comes to \$3.2 million (approximately \$17 million budget)
- d. School Warrant Articles (i.e. maintenance, technical service, etc.)
- e. Five unsettled collective Bargaining agreements that were not included in the proposed operating budget

Mrs. Woolsey said that the objective of the Budget Committee is to stabilize the tax rate. She also suggested that the Selectmen seek new and innovative budgeting ideas from other communities such as the use of Public Sector Audit Committees and a work program for retired individuals to reduce their tax bill.

This year the Budget Committee tried to help the Selectmen by providing recommendations. Mrs. Woolsey prioritized the recommendations as follows: spreading the debt for the police station over a larger number of years, to plan for the Town revaluation (remeasure & relist) by establishing a capital reserve fund, a new cash register and associated printer for the tax department, hiring of 20 police specials, Conservation Commission coordinator position contingent to a cost recovery system, municipal waste alternatives, and four firefighter positions.

Mrs. Woolsey reminded the Board that there are a lot of people who are financially struggling within the community and the tax rate needs to be controlled. She also encouraged voters to come to the Deliberative Session and vote on items affecting all Hampton residents.

Selectmen's Response

Mr. Griffin is also interested in restructuring the debt.

Mr. Moore commented on refinancing the Police Station. He pointed out that by increasing the duration of the loan will increase the overall cost and it is likely it would be at a higher interest rate. Mr. Moore also commented on the Data Collection position as he believes it is a much better payback for taxpayers than outsourcing the job. Amortized over a ten year period is the same as hiring an external agency and a remeasure/relist would be done twice within that period of time and would ultimately benefit Hampton in the long run. Mr. Moore agrees with Mrs. Woolsey that alternative waste management methods should be revisited and considered.

Mr. Lally agrees with Mr. Moore regarding the Data Collection position. He restated the Town Assessor's comments from a previous meeting referring having the ability to accomplish twice as much work within a 10 year time frame. The other concern that Mr. Lally has about placing a special reserve fund article on the warrant is the possibility that voters do not support it every year. Mr. Lally acknowledged that the police and fire departments need additional personnel and noted that the Budget Committee did not assign enough money within their dollar figure to finance these additional positions.

Mrs. Woolsey said that the biggest problem is the lack of planning for the future.

Chairman Bridle-Russell noted that the Budget Committee gave the Selectmen great suggestions yet eliminated \$1.8 million from the proposed budget. She said that the Board has some critical issues to think about and innovative ways to hire additional staff. She also pointed out that Hampton has put off vital drainage and other important infrastructure projects that have cost taxpayers more in the long run. Chairman Bridle-Russell encouraged all residents to vote on these important issues.

The Budget Committee Public Hearing will be held on January 11 at 7PM at Hampton Academy.

2 – MARY BOYNTON – TAYLOR RIVER ESTATES ROAD

The Chairman of the Taylor River Estates Homeowners Association, Mary Boynton accompanied by Irving Boynton came before the Board. Mrs. Boynton explained that in 1982 the road serving Taylor River Estates was constructed in accordance with the Town of Hampton Subdivision Regulations. This involved building the road to the same quality standard as Town Accepted Roads.

In 2002 the subdivision regulations were changed. For the residents of Taylor River to rebuild to today's code would cost in excess of \$850,000. On behalf of the Homeowners Association, Mrs. Boynton requests that the road be accepted under the grandfather clause in which it was built.

Mrs. Boynton explained that the homeowners of Taylor River Estates do not receive the same services as the majority of Hampton residents. The Town does not provide trash pickup or snow removal yet they pay the same level of taxes as other property owners. Mrs. Boynton would like for the Selectmen to consider providing these services or reduce their taxes. She also pointed out that there is only one road into and out of the Estates and requested that the road be considered an emergency lane.

There is a lack of consistency when it comes to servicing private roads in Hampton. Some roads are plowed, some receive trash pickup; there is no consistent system. Chairman Bridle-Russell noted that there is no simple solution that will please everyone. Public Works and Attorney Gearreald will need to be consulted and two public hearings will be required.

Interim Town Manager and Town Attorney Gearreald reminded the group that state law prohibiting the Town to expend money on servicing private roadways. He noted that the residents may submit a petitioned warrant article to be added to the ballot. He also pointed out that voters need to understand that these services cost money and providing them to Taylor River will set precedence.

Mr. Boynton expressed his frustration with the number of road blocks and stalling that they have encountered while trying to have the Taylor River Road taken over by the Town. He is just looking for some fairness and equality.

Mr. Lally agreed with the Boynton's that there is a lack of fairness when it comes to private road services in Hampton. This is not a new problem as it has been going on for many years. The Board of Selectmen need to carefully review and consider the issues of providing services to private roads as it may pose financial problems.

Mr. Griffin believes that being fair and equitable should be paramount when dealing with servicing private roads.

Mr. Workman asked the Boynton's not to feel like Taylor River Estates is being singled out as there are many communities that are faced with a similar situation. He is hopeful that the Board will have time to take an in-depth look at the problem and remedy it.

Mr. Boynton voiced his concern about the senior citizens in his community who are having difficulties paying their taxes. Mrs. Bridle-Russell asked him to tell them to apply for an elderly exemption.

III. MINUTES – DECEMBER 28, 2006

Page 3 – under “Year End Financials – Selectmen’s Response – motion should read as follows: “...encumber as itemized the \$235,246.76 for warrant articles.”

Page 5 – third paragraph - counsel rather than council

The minutes of December 28 stand as corrected.

IV. OLD BUSINESS

1. INTERIM TOWN MANAGER’S REPORT

Long time Hampton Police Officer Al Roach will be retiring from full-time service effective February 1, 2007. Al started with our Police force in May of 1971 on a part time basis, and became full time in October of 1987. He has served as DARE Officer, juvenile prosecutor, and driving instructor. George James from the Fire Department will be retiring March 1, 2007. He was hired in 1987 and attained his paramedic license while working in Hampton.

The Budget Committee has two more scheduled public meetings: Tuesday, January 9, 2007 for Town and School Special Money articles, and Thursday, January 11, 2007 for the Public Hearing on the Town and School Budget, Estimated Revenues, and Special Money Articles.

As of this writing, we have received four petitioned warrant articles dealing with the following subjects:

A policy regarding naming new streets and roadways after Hampton residents who have died in the line of duty, either in the U.S. military or in the employment of the Town;

A new appropriation for Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Seacoast;

Increasing the number of trustees of the trust funds from 3 to 5; and

An appropriation for Rockingham Nutrition and Meals on Wheels in the same amount as last year.

Two other petitions have been submitted, but they lack the sufficient number of verifiable resident signatures. These petitions concern banning smoking in Hampton restaurants and expending \$100,000.00 for creating a senior center in the old Town Office building. Their sponsors have been alerted to these shortcomings.

Residents were reminded that the deadline for submission of fully executed petitioned articles is Tuesday, January 9, 2007 at 5:00 p.m. to the Administrative Assistant, Maureen Duffy. Mr. Gearreald mentioned that the last day to accept petitions to amend zoning ordinance, historic district ordinance or building code for consideration at the 2007 town meeting was December 13, 2006. He also pointed out that these zoning petitions are reviewed and considered by the Planning Board not the Selectmen.

The Town Offices will be closed on Monday, January 15, 2007 in observance of Martin Luther King Civil Rights Day.

Administrative Assistant Maureen Duffy and Legal Assistant Wanda Robertson are doing major work to prepare the Annual Report for the year ending December 31, 2006. The theme of this report will be "Experience Counts" and will focus on the assets our employees bring to bear in the Town's service. The plan is to dedicate this year's Report to former Town Manager James Barrington.

Fire Chief Hank Lipe reports that great progress has been made towards completing the governmental pier at Hampton Harbor.

Ellen Goethel for the Conservation Commission was successful in entering into a Purchase and Sales Agreement for the Ice Pond land on Woodland Road. The next step will be a request for approval of a boundary line adjustment to go before the Planning Board to add jurisdictional wetlands to what is to be acquired by the Commission in the Town's name. A projected closing date for the purchase is February 15, 2007.

The Planning Board will be conducting its second public hearing on proposed zoning amendments on Wednesday, January 10, 2007 at 7:00 p.m. Eight amendments are being proposed by the Board.

Reconstruction of a portion of the Kings Highway sewer commenced on Tuesday, December 26, and weather permitting, should be completed during the second week of this month.

Finance Director Mike Schwotzer is currently heavily involved in several projects: closing out last year's budget items, preparing budget forms relating to the 2007 Budget and preparing for the auditors to commence their work this month on our annual audit.

BOARD'S RESPONSE TO THE MANAGER'S REPORT

Mr. Griffin asked for clarification about the deadline for zoning ordinance petitions. Mr. Gearreald explained that the deadline was December 13, 2006, no petitions related to zoning ordinance, historic district ordinance or building code will be accepted after that date. It is state law.

2. 2007 WARRANT – FURTHER DISCUSSIONS

Article 10

“...to raise and appropriate the sum of \$4,602,000 for the purpose of performing needed drainage projects over a three year period...”

Mr. Lally MOTIONED to recommend Article 10 relating to the drainage project. **Mr. Workman SECONDED.**
VOTE: UNANIMOUS FOR

Article 11

“...raise and appropriate as an operating budget, not including appropriations by special or individual warrant articles and other appropriations voted separately, the amounts set forth in the budget posted with the warrant, for the purposes set forth therein, totaling \$23,609,157? Should this article be defeated, the operating budget shall be \$24,302,591 which is the same as last year, with certain adjustments required by previous action of the Town Meeting or by law, or the governing body may hold one special meeting, in accordance with RSA 40:13, X and XVI, to take up the issue of a revised operating budget only.” ...

Mr. Moore MOTIONED to NOT recommend Article 11 relating to the budget. **Mr. Workman SECONDED.**
VOTE: UNANIMOUS FOR

Article 12

“...raise and appropriate the sum of \$3,500 to pay to the Hampton Area Chamber of Commerce to help defray the expenses of the 2007 Children’s Christmas Parade...”

Mr. Workman MOTIONED to recommend Article 12 relating to contributing to the Christmas Parade. **Mr. Lally SECONDED.**
VOTE: UNANIMOUS FOR

Article 13

“...appropriate only the sum of \$90,000 from revenues generated from the Police Forfeiture Fund, a Special Revenue Fund created by Article 55 of the 2003 Town Meeting to carry out all lawful functions allowed under federal, state and local criminal justice forfeiture programs...”

Mr. Moore MOTIONED to recommend Article 13 regarding the Police Forfeiture Fund. **Mr. Lally SECONDED.**
VOTE: UNANIMOUS FOR

Article 14

“...appropriate only the sum of \$70,000 from revenues generated from the Hampton Cable TV Local Origination Fund, a Special Revenue Fund...”

Mr. Griffin MOTIONED to recommend Article 14 regarding the Hampton Cable TV Local Origination Fund. **Mr. Workman SECONDED.**
VOTE: UNANIMOUS FOR

Article 15

“...appropriate only the sum of \$18,300 generated from the sale of town-owned cemetery lots, to the Cemetery Burial Trust Fund; the interest from this Fund is withdrawn annually and deposited in the Town’s General Fund as an offset to the amount appropriated in the operating budget for the maintenance of the cemeteries...”

Mr. Moore MOTIONED to recommend Article 1 regarding the Hampton Cemetery Burial Trust Fund. **Mr. Griffin SECONDED.**

VOTE: UNANIMOUS FOR

Article 16

“...raise and appropriate the sum of \$1,800 to defray the costs of services by the Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) provided to Hampton residents?...”

Mr. Moore MOTIONED to recommend Article 16 regarding the RSVP. **Mr. Lally SECONDED.**

VOTE: UNANIMOUS FOR

Article 17

“...raise and appropriate the sum of \$5,500 to fund the Social Service Agency Funding Request from “A Safe Place”...”

Mr. Moore MOTIONED to recommend Article 17 regarding A Safe Place. **Mr. Lally SECONDED.**

VOTE: UNANIMOUS FOR

Petitioned Warrant Article “To Date”

“...raise and appropriate the sum of Sixty five hundred dollars (\$6,500) for the purpose of defraying the cost of services provided to the Town of Hampton and its residents by Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Greater Seacoast.”

Mr. Moore MOTIONED to NOT recommend the petitioned article from Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Greater Seacoast. **Mr. Griffin SECONDED.**

VOTE: UNANIMOUS FOR

“...raise and appropriate the amount of \$3,930 to support Rockingham Nutrition & Meals On Wheels...”

Mr. Moore MOTIONED to recommend the petitioned article from Rockingham Nutrition & Meals on Wheels. **Mr. Griffin SECONDED.**

VOTE: UNANIMOUS FOR

The Board will meet tomorrow, January 9th at 6PM to review the rest of the petitioned articles.

3. APPROVAL OF 2007 DEFAULT BUDGET

Finance Director Mike Schwotzer came before the Board of Selectmen to seek approval for the 2007 Default Budget. Mr. Schwotzer provided the Board with a summary of his calculations in determining the Default Budget (\$24,302,591). The biggest issues this year is the increase in retirement, municipal insurance (i.e. health), and long term debt principal and interest (new loans - Kings Highway and the Beach Infrastructure Project).

The Budget Committee set their budget at the same figure that the Town is currently working with (\$23,609,157). The Default Budget that Mr. Schwotzer has proposed is approximately \$700,000 more than the Committee's figure as it covers the increases in costs that we do not have any control over such as insurance.

The Board thanked Mr. Schwotzer for doing a fine job.

Mr. Moore MOTIONED to accept the 2007 Default Budget as presented. **Mr. Workman SECONDED.**

VOTE: UNANIMOUS FOR

4. TURNAROUND EASEMENT -

There is no cost to the Town to make certain the turnaround is accessible. The easement is part of the agreement that the Planning Board had with the developer.

Mr. Moore MOTIONED to authorize the Town Manager to sign the Turnaround Easement for Mill Pond Lane and Glen Road. **Mr. Workman SECONDED.**

VOTE: UNANIMOUS FOR

5. TOWN MANAGER SEARCH

Mr. Griffin MOTIONED to hire Fredrick Welch as the new Town Manager for Hampton. **Mr. Workman SECONDED.**

VOTE: 4 FOR
Abstained: Moore

There were approximately 50 applicants with a variety of expertise and experience. The Board felt that Mr. Welch was the best candidate and they look forward to working with him.

Chairman Bridle-Russell thanked Attorney Jim Higgins and the Local Government Center for their assistance with the hiring process. She also thanked Mr. Gearreald for being the Interim Town Manager since August.

V. NEW BUSINESS

Since the passing of President Ford on December 27, 2006, all American flags are to be at half-staff for 30 days. There were obstacles such as seized pulleys preventing the flag at Locke Road and Bicentennial Park from being lowered.

Mr. Lally requested immediate maintenance to the flag poles to ensure that they function properly.

Mr. Griffin mentioned that Brooke Rallis's father, Jeff Rallis came to see him. Mr. Rallis is very upset regarding the denial of his daughter's Workers Compensation benefits. It is unclear to what caused Brooke's injury and the Worker's Compensation carrier has denied her claim. Mr. Griffin suggested that Mr. Rallis speak to Mr. Gearreald about the issue.

Mr. Griffin is not sure why the Town Report should be dedicated to James Barrington and does not believe it is the right choice. He suggested that perhaps Bill Elliot (The Singing Cop) should be considered. Mr. Moore said that Mr. Barrington spent 9½ years of his life managing the general operations of the Town and that he has no issues with dedicating the report to James. Mr. Lally has no problem with the report being dedicated to Mr. Barrington and believes that he did a lot of good things to improve Hampton. Mr. Lally said that perhaps the new Seashell Stadium could be named after The Singing Cop. Mr. Workman has no issue with dedicating the report to James. Mr. Griffin thinks that the report should be dedicated to a Hampton resident. Chairman Bridle-Russell noted that the average employment period of a Town Manager is two to three years and that James almost stayed for 10. She also pointed out that Mr. Barrington always fought hard and tried to do what was best for Hampton and did, in fact, reside in Hampton. She also commented on the good working relationship he had with Town employees and thinks that it would be a nice gesture to dedicate the report to James Barrington.

Chairman Bridle-Russell is not happy with the state of the Town flags and would like the problem to resolve immediately. There was also discussion on whether or not there is a light on the flag at Bicentennial Park.

Mr. Griffin talked about two people who have contacted him about the two different fees for ambulance service. Mr. Griffin would like to see a copy of the ambulance billing policy. The Board would like to see Deputy Chief of Safety Chris Silver come to a Selectmen's meeting to discuss ambulance billing.

Mr. Moore would like a letter written to the Planning Board suggesting that they consider generating more revenue by increasing the fees for wetland applications.

Mr. Moore MOTIONED NOT to have a meeting next Monday, January 15 in observance of Martin Luther King Civil Rights Day. **Mr. Workman SECONDED.**

VOTE: 4 FOR
OPPOSED: Bridle-Russell

Chairman Bridle-Russell asked if the huge puddle at the end of P Street and Ashworth Avenue could be attended to. Mr. Gearreald will look into the problem.

VI. CONSENT AGENDA

1. Cemetery Deed

Mr. Griffin MOTIONED to accept the presented Cemetery Deed. **Mr. Workman SECONDED.**

VOTE: UNANIMOUS FOR

VII PUBLIC COMMENTS

Andrew Guthrie came to the Board of Selectmen in protest of the Selectmen not accepting zoning petitions when the January 9th deadline has been announced repeatedly. Mr. Moore explained that zoning petitions have nothing to do with the Selectmen and that it is a Planning Board issue. Mr. Gearreald explained that the January 9th deadline is for petitioned articles on the regular warrant and not zoning petitioned articles.

Tammy Deland also came before the Board to dispute the January 9th deadline. She said that her growth management petition should be considered by the Selectmen. Mr. Lally explained that the subject is a Planning Board issue and the Selectmen have no jurisdiction over that Board or ordinance. Ms. Deland was reminded that she had also sought to file a proposed zoning amendment too late last year. The Selectmen have no authority to waive the deadline imposed by State law.

The Planning Board had announced the December 13th deadline for petitioned articles at multiple meetings in preparation for conducting its Public Hearings. All deadlines and specific dates for SB2 towns with a March meeting are posted on the Town website calendar.

VIII. CLOSING COMMENTS:

None

ix. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Workman MOTIONED to adjourn at 9:46PM. **Mr. Moore SECONDED.**

VOTE: UNANIMOUS FOR

Chairman